for so long. Like water spilled on uneven ground, they followed the contours of the soil, took advantage of every opening, and flowed irresistibly into every gap. But the analogy may be pursued a little further. After a time, the water is absorbed by the soil. Its moisture has been drunk in, with beneficial results. The earth on which it fell has to some extent been fructified. Yet in the process the water has ceased to have an independent existence. So, too, in the phenomenon which we are attempting to examine. It was seldom long before these Jewish pioneers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries lost their specific Jewish characteristics—in many cases, even their Jewish loyalties. The fertilising impetus and enthusiasms which they had brought became absorbed into the common store and enriched the common life: but the distinctiveness had passed away. On the other hand, the new ideas and methods were by now universal property. Hence in many callings in which the Jews were once imagined to have a dominant position, their influence dwindled progressively as the nineteenth century advanced and the twentieth began: though in many instances the legend outlived the actuality.[1]

It was natural that, the older established a Jewish centre was, the more rapid was the rise of its children:

*A fact which tended to obscure this phenomenon was that the emergence of the Jews from their repressed condition was not simultaneous. In some places, emancipation was retarded: in many families, the influence of conservatism was stronger: sometimes, the percolation

took longer to achieve. The impression might thus bo given of a continuous advance. Actually, this did not take place. In more than one generation, there was a fresh exodus (though on a scale which was in fact unimportant): but by this time the earlier wave had reached its climax, or even begun to recede. The initial impetus, indeed, seldom lasted for more than one generation, or two at the most; for the transmission of outstanding ability from generation to generation is at least as rare among Jews as among their neighbours. The children of the Ghetto prodigy, who dazzled the eyes of his neighbours, generally developed into Englishmen or Frenchmen or Germans of normal tastes, normal interests and normal ability, indistinguishable from their neighbours excepting by a diminishing family tradition.